

American

NEWS & VIEWS

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Statement by President Obama on Attack in Turkey

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
October 19, 2011

Statement by the President on the Attack in Turkey

The United States strongly condemns this morning's outrageous terrorist attack against Turkey, one of our closest and strongest allies. On behalf of the American people, I offer my condolences to the families of the victims and to all of the Turkish people.

The United States will continue our strong cooperation with the Turkish government as it works to defeat the terrorist threat from the PKK and to bring peace, stability and prosperity to all the people of southeast Turkey. The people of Turkey, like people everywhere, deserve to live in peace, security and dignity. As they pursue the future they deserve, they will continue to have a friend and ally in the United States.

Secretary Clinton and Libyan Youth Share Views on Libya's "New Era"

By Stephen Kaufman | Staff Writer

Washington — During her October 18 visit to Libya, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton had a detailed conversation with young people over what they can do to safeguard the gains from their recent revolution and how they can help transform Libya into a modern, prosperous and inclusive democracy.

Clinton told youth and civil society representatives at a town hall meeting in Tripoli that she wanted to hear what they wanted from the United States and from their new government, and she pledged that the United States "will be here as your partner."

The secretary challenged her audience to make their own individual contributions to the new Libya that is taking shape after the end of Muammar Qadhafi's 42-year reign. She also said that the Libyan people can find examples from all over the world of protecting free speech and other human rights, organizing politically and preventing the rise of another autocratic regime.

"You have faced your challenges and conducted your revolution with courage and commitment. You demanded the rights and the dignity of a free people, and you withstood the brutal assaults from those who were only wedded to the past. And now we have a new era," Clinton said.

Libyans, including previously marginalized voices such

as women and the young, have "given so much" to bring about Libya's new reality, and they expect much in return, she said.

"Those expectations are warranted, but it will take time, effort and some patience to achieve the goals that you seek," she said.

"The United States will help you. We'll help you with resources, with technical expertise, with any kind of support for elections and for economic opportunities," she said. "You name it, we are ready to be helpful to you, but want it to be your priorities, not anybody else's."

The secretary was asked what steps Libya's youth should take to better integrate their country with the world, and how best to overcome their political inexperience and mobilize themselves for upcoming elections.

Clinton suggested they reach out over the Internet to people in other countries who have gone through their own recent transitions to democracy.

"I think that some of the experiences that are more recent, particularly in Latin America, maybe Central and Eastern Europe, in countries like Malaysia, Indonesia ... could be of great benefit to you," she said. "They're very vibrant democracies. They have political parties. Men and women run and get elected. And I think that would be one of our principal objectives, which is to help you look for and find the best ways to organize."

She also suggested that they take advantage of the assistance that nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) from the United States and other countries can offer.

"How do you create a political party? How do you create a political platform? How do you campaign? What are the techniques that are most useful to reaching people?" Clinton said. Officials at U.S. embassies can provide such information, as well as help connect people with NGOs and other groups "that can give you the kind of advice that you're looking for," she said.

But it is important for everyone to fight the urge to leave the political process to others and return home, to their studies or to their jobs, even though they may be exhausted after many months of struggle against Qadhafi's forces, Clinton said.

"In a democracy, the best political process is the one that involves the most people and gets people to feel strongly about their choices and what they want from their leaders," she said.

Building an effective political movement will take time, and compromise is difficult but essential in any

democracy. But “no democracy can function effectively unless every group contributes,” including women and the young, she said.

Libya will also need to find ways of reconciling its diverse population and resist the urge to “settle scores from the past,” she said.

“Countries that keep looking over their shoulders toward the past, and they want to find the guy who did the bad thing to their family 20 years ago, and they want to do this and they want to do that, find it difficult to move forward,” Clinton said. She offered Chile, South Africa and Rwanda as examples of how it is possible to move forward from a traumatic past.

International Conversation on Cybersecurity Is Under Way

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer

Washington — Cybersecurity is the fundamental base supporting all Internet activity, be it political, economic or social. October, recognized as National Cybersecurity Awareness Month since 2002 in the United States, is a time when governments, businesses and individuals must all recognize their role in maintaining cybersecurity, according to the U.S. State Department’s coordinator for cyber issues, Christopher Painter.

Painter’s remarks at an October 18 Washington press briefing echoed the proclamation for National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, issued by the White House October 3 on behalf of President Obama.

“This month, we recognize the role we all play in ensuring our information and communications infrastructure is interoperable, secure, reliable, and open to all,” the proclamation says.

The proclamation also notes the Obama administration’s release in May 2011 of an International Strategy for Cyberspace, addressing a range of cyberspace issues in one framework.

“It sets an agenda for partnering with other nations and better defines how we can ensure the secure, free flow of information and promote universal rights, privacy, and prosperity,” says the proclamation.

These issues form a “new foreign policy imperative for us,” Painter said at the briefing, one that the administration will pursue among the community of nations with “patient, persistent and creative diplomacy.”

Information technologies have become such a critical tool in modern life, Painter said, that the international community must develop a mutual policy built upon

some core values. In an ongoing multilateral dialogue, he said, nations will be discussing “shared norms” about cyberspace conduct that will sustain the interoperability, openness, security and reliability that users rely upon. In this discussion, the United States will promote longstanding values — such as respect for freedoms, respect for privacy, protection from crime — and some values unique to the Internet: network stability, reliable access and governance protecting the interests of all those who use the Internet responsibly.

Painter made his remarks at the State Department’s Foreign Press Center, where journalists from an array of international media outlets questioned him about cyberattacks rumored to be stewing in any number of capitals. Painter would not comment on any particular report or individual country, but acknowledged that the danger of plots that could create online mayhem are very real, and must be taken seriously. But when one reporter repeated a story circulating in Asia about the prospect of a “large-scale cyberwar,” Painter gave the story no credence.

“Our job is to avoid any kind of cyber conflict,” Painter responded. “I don’t think you’d have a cyber conflict outside a normal conflict; I don’t think that’s likely to happen.” The State Department’s cyber envoy repeated the need for nations to maintain an ongoing dialogue to reach mutual understandings for online conduct.

Though the October observance shines a spotlight on cybersecurity, Painter said it is not an end in itself. Rather, he said, cybersecurity should be viewed as an ongoing activity that creates the foundation to support all other online activities.

It’s a foundation “that enables the economic innovation on the Internet, that enables the social growth and the free expression and Internet freedom,” Painter said. “All that can be compromised if, for instance, criminals ran roughshod on the Internet.” Expression and innovation must coexist with regulation and security, Painter said, and they must be maintained in a proper balance so security does not override expression and innovation.

Painter said many aspects of this issue are discussed at the Web site staysafeonline.org, maintained by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. “Stop, Think and Connect” is the motto for promotion of National CyberSecurity Awareness Month, during which officials hope to increase knowledge and awareness about safe conduct on the Internet for individuals and businesses.

State Dept. on U.N. Report on Human Rights in Iran

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson
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STATEMENT BY MARK TONER, DEPUTY
SPOKESPERSON

Interim Report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Human
Rights in Iran

We welcome the first interim report by the UN Special Rapporteur for human rights in Iran, Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, and take note of his assessment regarding the Iranian government's "pattern of systemic violation" of its citizens' rights. The UN Secretary General's report on Iran's human rights situation also described an "intensified" campaign of abuses.

Under international law and its own constitution, Iran has committed to protect and defend the rights of its people, but officials continue to stifle all forms of dissent, persecute religious and ethnic minorities, harass and intimidate human rights defenders, and engage in the torture of detainees.

Iran's brutal repression continues unabated despite repeated international condemnation and increasing isolation: opposition leaders Mir-Hossein Moussavi and Mehdi Karroubi, now entering their ninth month under house arrest without charges, are being held virtually incommunicado, while journalists and student activists are targeted for their "anti-regime" activities. Dr. Shaheed and the Secretary General both expressed alarm over the growing use of the death penalty for minor crimes, against minors and without due process.

We are particularly concerned that Iran has ignored its UN obligations and refused to cooperate with Dr. Shaheed. We call upon Iran's government to allow the Special Rapporteur immediate access to the country.

We note that Iran has refused entry for any UN Special Rapporteur since 2005 in a blatant attempt to prevent the world from bearing witness to the abuses against its own people.

The United States stands by the Iranian people, who wish nothing more than to make their voices heard and hold their government accountable for its actions. We call upon the international community to use the occasion of these reports to redouble its condemnation of Iran's disgraceful abuse of the human rights of all its citizens and demand a change.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov>)